

PREPARING YOUTH FOR TRANSITION



By Paula Saenz and the Youth Leadership Council



Pieces to the Puzzle:

- The Reality of Foster Care
- Chafee Independence
- Transition Planning
- Kentucky Resources
- The Experts.

The Reality....

- Approximately 20,000 youth “age out” of the foster-care system each year nationally.
- These are youth who, because of allegations of abuse or neglect, have been separated from their families for their protection and for whom **no permanent plan was successfully implemented.**

The experience of foster care itself can be **traumatizing** to youth, as they must cope with

- Frequent moves
- Changing schools
- Normalcy Issues
- Not having Permanency
- Aging out without Permanency

Something to Think about....



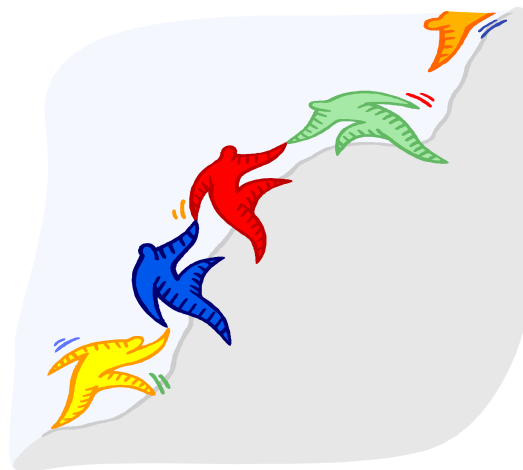
- More than one fifth(4,000) of former foster youth experienced homelessness for one day or more within a year of aging out, compared to the national statistic of 1 percent per year.
- Over 50 percent of foster-care alumni have at least one mental-health diagnosis; 25 percent are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.

- Foster-care alumni obtain a GED instead of a high-school diploma at nearly six times the rate of the general population; less than 2 percent of former foster youth complete a bachelor's degree.
- The employment rate among alumni who are eligible to work is 80 percent, compared to the national average of 95 percent; the rate of former foster youth receiving cash aid is five times higher than the national average.



What is Chafee Independence?

- Early 90's the late Senator John Chafee advocated to congress to increase funds given to states to assist youth transitioning into adult hood.
- In 1999, Title IV-E was amended to include the John Chafee Foster Care Independence Act.
- This act provided funding to states to assist youth in making the transition from foster care to independent living.



The Purpose

- To “provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients
- National funding for the independent living program is \$140 million per year
- Kentucky 2012 Chafee Allocation, \$2,282,955, 2012 ETV Allocation \$761,233.00



Preparing DCBS Youth for

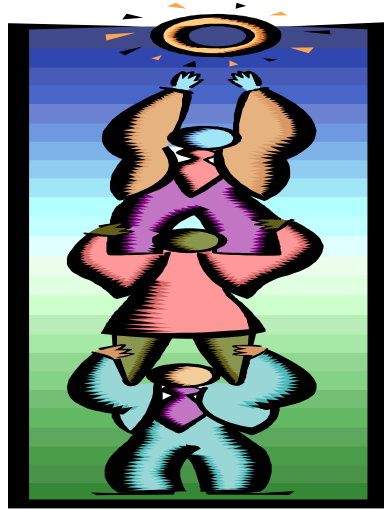


- Soft Skills (12-15)
 - Independent Living Classes (stipend) (16-21)
 - Regional Events (14-21)
 - Yearly Teen Conference (16-21)
 - Transition Plan at 1st Case Plan Meeting closest to 17th Birthday.
 - Facilitated Transition Plan with IL Coordinator.
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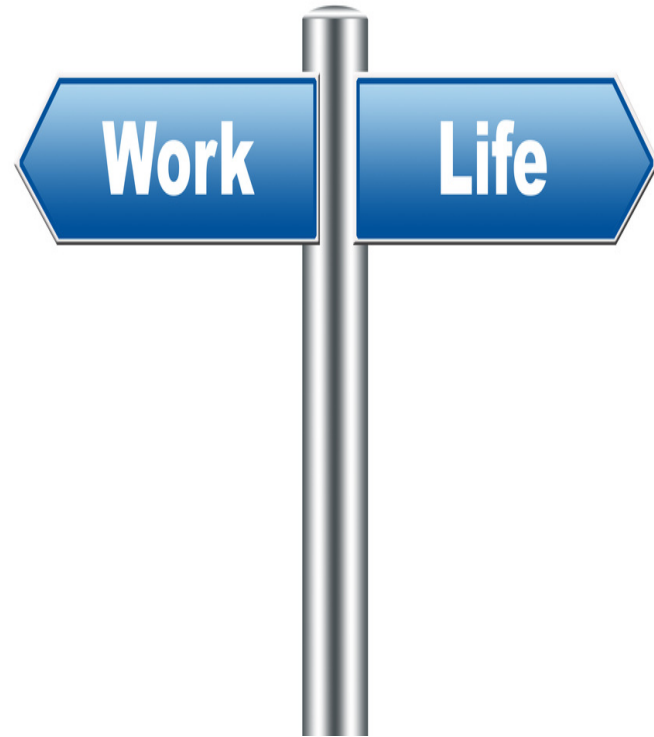
The SSW ensures that a **Transition Plan** is developed with input from all youth at first case planning conference at age seventeen (17).



- The SSW reviews progress toward the youth's transition plan goals during monthly supervisory conferences.
- The independent living coordinator facilitates a transition plan meeting that must occur within ninety (90) days of a youth attaining age eighteen (18).



- Is the youth planning to participate in an extension or reinstatement of commitment for transitional living support.
- There is a 6 month grace period to recommit after aging out at age 18



Transition = Ongoing Process

- Continued guidance during case plan reviews after 18.
- Youth can request additional transition plan through their ILC or Social Worker.



Tuition Waiver

Who's Eligible?

- DCBS and DJJ YOUTH 18-21
- Youth left care on or after 18
- Youth Adopted from State Foster Care

How's it Work?

- Waives cost of tuition to any KY Public Post Secondary School.
- The Waiver must start no more than 4 years from the date of high school graduation
- The Waiver is good for 5 years from date of first entry into school

Education Training Voucher

- Federally funded through Chafee Independence Program
- Assists youth with any expenses directly related to a post secondary education or job training program. Youth must show financial need and submit a FAFSA to receive services.
- Up to \$5,000 per youth per year
- Available to youth who aged out of CHFS custody on or after their 18th birthday or who were adopted from CHFS on or after their 16th birthday



Who's Eligible?

- Youth currently committed to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) or Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) ages 16-21.
- Youth who have aged out of care on or after their 18th birthday up to their 23rd birthday.
- *DJJ youth are not eligible for the Education Training Voucher Program.

Room and Board Program

- Kentucky currently utilizes 30% of federal dollars.
- Program offers six months of housing assistance.
- DCBS and DJJ youth are currently eligible.
- DCBS currently contracts with the Kentucky Housing Corporation.
- KHC provides a home inspection, assists with leasing paperwork, utility deposits, and provides household start up funds.



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